

The President's Weekly Address

June 26, 2010

This weekend, I'm traveling to Toronto to meet the members of the G-20. There, I hope we can build on the progress we made at last year's G-20 summits by coordinating our global financial reform efforts to make sure a crisis like the one from which we are still recovering never happens again. We've made great progress towards passing such reform here at home. As I speak, we are on the cusp of enacting the toughest financial reforms since the Great Depression.

I don't have to tell you why these reforms are so important. We're still digging ourselves out of an economic crisis that happened largely because there wasn't strong enough oversight on Wall Street. We can't build a strong economy in America over the long run without ending this status quo and laying a new foundation for growth and prosperity.

That's what the Wall Street reforms currently making their way through Congress will help us do, reforms that represent 90 percent of what I proposed when I took up this fight. We'll put in place the strongest consumer financial protections in American history and create an independent agency with an independent director and an independent budget to enforce them.

Credit card companies will no longer be able to mislead you with pages and pages of fine print. You will no longer be subject to all kinds of hidden fees and penalties or the predatory practices of unscrupulous lenders. Instead, we'll make sure credit card companies and mortgage companies play by the rules. And you'll be empowered with easy-to-understand forms and the clear and concise information you need to make the financial decisions that are best for you and your family.

Wall Street reform will also strengthen our economy in a number of other ways. We'll make our financial system more transparent by bringing the kinds of complex trades that helped trigger this crisis—trades in a \$600 trillion derivatives market—finally into the light of day. We'll enact what's called the Volcker rule to make sure banks protected by safety nets like the FDIC can't engage in risky trades for their own profit. We'll create what's called a resolution authority to help wind down firms whose collapse would threaten our entire financial system. Put simply, we'll end the days of taxpayer-funded bailouts and help make sure Main Street is never again held responsible for Wall Street's mistakes.

Beyond these reforms, we also need to address another piece of unfinished business. We need to impose a fee on the banks that were the biggest beneficiaries of taxpayer assistance at the height of our financial crisis, so we can recover every dime of taxpayer money.

Getting this far on Wall Street reform hasn't been easy. There are those who've fought it tooth and nail to preserve the status quo. In recent months, they've spent millions of dollars and hired an army of lobbyists to stop reform dead in its tracks.

But because we refused to back down and kept fighting, we now stand on the verge of victory. And I urge Congress to take us over the finish line and send me a reform bill I can sign into law, so we can empower our people with consumer protections and help prevent a financial crisis like this from ever happening again.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:15 p.m. on June 24 in the Red Room at the White House for broadcast on June 26. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 25 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on June 26. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

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